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INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS LILONGWE 000304

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SUBJECT: MALAWI: INFORMATION ON FORCED LABOR AND CHILD LABOR IN THE  
PRODUCTION OF GOODS

REF: STATE 43120

1. According to the Ministry of Labor, Malawi has no reported cases of forced labor. While child labor is a notable problem in services such as domestic work, family farms, and fishing, the Government of Malawi has enacted laws to prohibit child labor and has developed national policies and programs to meet the urgent needs of the Malawi children. The Malawi Child Labor Survey of 2002 (ILO, 2004), with funding from the United States Department of Labor, estimated that 37 percent of children aged 5-17 engaged in child labor - working both within their family's houses and outside their homes in economic and non-economic activities. Despite this percentage, child labor is not product- or good-specific.

2. The Government of Malawi, along with ILO, has successfully established programs, with support from various donor agencies, to eliminate incidences of child labor through involvement of employer and employee business associations in formal sector and civic education campaigns in rural areas. The programs have made great strides since the survey in reducing the levels of child labor at the commercial level in the tea and tobacco industries almost completely. As such, the majority of child labor in Malawi currently exists in domestic services and small-holder agriculture production remaining hard to regulate, but by their nature touch few products that are produced for export.

3. Both the constitution of the Republic of Malawi and the Employment Act of 2000 prohibit child labor. Malawi has also ratified the United Nations Charter on the Rights of the Child, the ILO Convention Against the Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention Number 182, and the ILO Convention on Minimum Age of Entry into Employment Convention 138.

EASTHAM